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Book Reviews.

The Epistles of St. Peter. The Expositor's Bible Series. By Professor J. R. LUMBY, D.D. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1893. Pp. xxiv+374. Price, \$1.50.

The literature upon the two Petrine Epistles is comparatively small. There is as yet, no large, standard commentary upon them, such as are Lightfoot's and Westcott's on the other Epistles. Professor Johnstone's volume on First Peter approaches such a work, and Huther's commentary on the Epistles in the Meyer series is good. Professor Plumptre's contribution in the Cambridge Bible Series is excellent as far as it goes, which may also be said of Professor Salmond's treatment of the Epistles in the four volume Schaff Commentary on the New Testament. But we yet need something more comprehensive, thorough, and final than any of these. Professor Lumby does not furnish us with such a work—the nature of the Series to which he contributes this volume precludes that. But he makes an attractive and valuable addition to the class of literature which we already possess upon the Petrine writings. His discussion of the authorship problem, especially as it concerns Second Peter, is scholarly and candid, carrying weight toward a continuance in the traditional belief that Peter really wrote both Epistles. The difficulties are not minimized or slighted, but counterbalancing evidence seems sufficient. The exposition is throughout clear, temperate, forceful, and inspiring. Of the many commentaries the author has prepared, this is one of the best.

C. W. V.

The Biblical Illustrator. Hebrews, Vols. I and II. James. Edited by Rev. J. S. EXELL, M.A. New York: A. D. F. Randolph & Co., 1894. Pp. xv, 653; 685; viii, 514, respectively. Price, \$2.00 per volume.

The design of this extensive, not to say interminable, series is to furnish "anecdotes, similes, emblems, illustrations, expository, scientific, geographical, historical, and homiletic, gathered from a wide range of home and foreign literature, on the verses of the Bible." That the compiler of this work has carried out his programme no one who has seen the volumes will deny. The type is brevier, set solid, and a paragraph occurs on an average about once in three pages. To the Epistle of Hebrews, 1,361 pages of this sort are devoted, that is, 105 pages to each chapter. The amount is just the same for the five chapters of James. The complete set of volumes upon the New Testament, will be, at this rate, thirty-five or forty in number, or about 24,000 pages. To read one page with profit could not take less than fifteen minutes, so that it would require some 6,000 hours to go through the work once. Pro-

digious! But presumably one is not supposed to *read* it, but only to *refer* to it. The selections which it contains are certainly excellent, taken from the best homiletical writers of our time. Of its kind, this series has no equal. For the preacher who depends wholly upon others for his thoughts and expressions and illustrations, nothing could be more convenient and useful than such volumes as these. They would form an economical library, too, for such a man; he would need scarce anything else—possibly not even a Bible. The effect of using such literature is to destroy any originality or individuality that a preacher may have. Of course if he has neither—but that is an impossible supposition. C. W. V.

The Kingdom of God: A plan of study in three parts, I. The Kingdom in Israel, II. The Kingdom in the Synoptic Sayings of Jesus, III. The Kingdom in Apostolic Times. Series of Bible Class Primers, edited by Professor Salmond. By Rev. F. H. STEAD, M.A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1894. Pp. 78+78+94. Price, 60 cents.

This little book is the outgrowth of actual work with a Bible Class upon the theme treated. It is arranged with reference to coöperative study, for the use of Bible Study classes and guilds. Specific directions are given for both the private study and the general meetings. The great theme which runs through the whole Bible, binding all its parts together, is the KINGDOM OF GOD—its principles, its characteristics, its development, its consummation. To exhibit the Kingdom of God in these various aspects has been the task that Mr. Stead has set himself, and he has accomplished it in a bright, fresh, truthful way. Beginning with the foundation of the nation of Israel through Moses, he traces the course of the Kingdom through the Old Testament, finding it principally in the activities and teachings of the Prophets, who are made to appear as living characters and mighty preachers of God. The treatment is admirable. The author adopts the approved findings of present day biblical criticism, and shows in his pages the great gain which results therefrom. The post-exilic period and the inter-testament literature are briefly but effectively handled. It is Part II, naturally, the Kingdom as set forth in the Sayings of Jesus, that is the most vital portion of the work. The collection and classification of the Synoptic material bearing upon the Kingdom of God is skillfully and wisely done. The study of this theme is of the highest importance to every one, and our author is here a trustworthy and informing guide. Pages 63-78; which give a summary of the Synoptic teaching on this subject, are very valuable. The apostolic period, with its deeds and literature, receives a similar exposition. Much attention is given to the doctrinal and ethical teaching of Paul. Appendix I. gives a collection of opinions from the eminent men of the Christian Church upon the kingdom of God, and Appendix II, indicates the witness of imperial history to the kingdom. The book is an